

487 Mayo the government of India, even at the risk of losing control over
 175 the trade routes to Yunnan, again stated its policy.²⁴ "The future
 439 annexation of Burma, or any of its adjacent states, is not an event
 648 which I . . . desire; . . . I should view with extreme regret . . .
 the necessity of occupation, or of assuming, even in a temporary man-
 ner, the government of any of the states lying adjacent to the province
 now in your charge." In short, the official attitude of the government
 of India has been summarized as follows: "The condition of the
 Northeastern frontier caused no Governor-General a single sleepless
 night."²⁵

RAILWAYS SUGGESTED

• 496 Meantime, British commercial interests continued to demand
 487 that the Indian government provide facilities for trade to western
 175 China in order to forestall any French plans to acquire prior advan-
 439 tages in Yunnan and Szechwan. The *Parliamentary Papers* alone
 648 contain nearly twenty reports on expeditions and proposals with
 respect to trans-Burma trade with western China and the upper
 Mekong from 1824 to 1900. The most persistent advocates of British
 penetration of Yunnan, Szechwan, and Kwangsi from the Bay of
 Bengal were Captain Richard Sprye and his son, who for half a cen-
 tury (1840-1890) presented numerous proposals for railways and
 highways into western Siam, to the Shan and Laos States, and to
 southern China.

Perhaps the best-publicized effort was that by Archibald R. Colquhoun, a deputy commissioner in British Burma, and Holt S. Hallett, a civil engineer. Colquhoun, who was ardently anti-French, resigned his office when the government of Burma refused him leave to survey a railway route from Moulmein to Szemao by way of Chiangmai in Siam. He became a special correspondent for the *London Times*, traveled overland from Canton to Bhamo, and wrote voluminously against French designs on Southeast Asia.²⁶ The Colquhoun-Hallett railway plan suffered from a general suspicion that it was merely a means for "taking the King of Siam by the hand and leading him into the great British Indian family."²⁷ Although Colquhoun's line is actually the shortest practicable route from the Bay of Bengal to Yunnanfu (Kunming), it passes through sparsely settled country that is everywhere malarial below 4000 feet. There is not today a railway line, caravan route, or highway, British or French or Siamese, that anywhere follows the Colquhoun-Hallett survey.

²⁴ Fytche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 124-125 (letter from Lord Mayo).

²⁵ D. G. E. Hall, edit.: *The Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence, 1852-1856*, London, 1932, p. xv.

²⁶ A. R. Colquhoun: *Across Chryse*, 2 vols., 2nd edit., London, 1883; A. R. Colquhoun and H. S. Hallett: *Report on the Railway Connection of Burmah and China*, London, 1887. See also H. S. Hallett: *A Thousand Miles on an Elephant in the Shan States*, Edinburgh and London, 1890.

²⁷ Philippe Lehault: *France et Angleterre en Asie*, Paris, 1892, p. 562.